



Advisory

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DWR Releases Water Delivery Impact Estimates on Wanger Decision

Sacramento – The Department of Water Resources has completed its revised operational model confirming water supply impacts from a recent federal court decision on Delta pumping.

The model provides a range of impacts on Delta water exports, depending on fish conditions and precipitation. If 2008 is a dry year, State Water Project customers will receive 7 to 22 percent less Delta water than would have been available without the court decision. If 2008 is an average water year, exports will be reduced 22 to 30 percent.

Federal Court Judge Wanger's final ruling, issued on December 14, curtails Delta pumping to protect the threatened Delta smelt. The decision underscores that the Delta is at risk, both environmentally and as a source of water for most of California's population, industry and agriculture.

This range is consistent with earlier estimates made by DWR following the court's initial ruling in August. Following Judge Wanger's final ruling, DWR performed additional modeling and analysis on the impacts.

The order will primarily affect export pumping between January and June, when juvenile Delta smelt are at greatest risk of entrainment in pumps. The actual impact on water supply will depend on a number of factors including the locations where adult smelt spawn and offspring hatch, levels of precipitation for the year, and water temperatures affecting how quickly the fish migrate.

The impacts on water supplies could be offset somewhat by water from the Environmental Water Account to the extent those water supplies are available this year.

DWR announced on Nov 26 its initial allocation for 2008 water delivery to the State Water Project (SWP) contractors would be 25 percent of the water contractors' total requested amounts. This initial allocation took into account the potential impact of the Wanger decision, and allocations could increase during the winter months if hydrologic conditions improve. DWR delivers water through the Delta to 25 million Californians and 750,000 acres of irrigated farmland.

The Department of Water Resources operates and maintains the State Water Project, provides dam safety and flood control and inspection services, assists local water districts in water management and water conservation planning, and plans for future statewide water needs.